

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated November 5, 2003, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on February 5, 2004. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application. Claims 1-28 and 30-40 remain pending following entry of this response. Claims 26 and 30-31 were amended. Claim 29 was cancelled without prejudice. Applicants submit that the amendments do not introduce new matter.

Claims 1-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Wical* (US 5,953,718). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The present invention is directed to front-end weight factor search criteria. Users input search expressions including one or more search terms each having one or more weight criteria which, in turn, have corresponding user designated score modifiers. In this way, users are able to dictate the relevancy of results on the basis of the search expression itself. Accordingly, the present invention provides a novel query syntax and content in the form of weight criteria and corresponding user designated score modifiers. In contrast, *Wical* does not provide for a novel query syntax or content, but rather provides a (presumptively) novel infrastructure for processing conventional queries. *Wical* states that "it is desirable to construct a search and retrieval system that is not highly dependent upon the exact words chosen for the query, but that generates a similar response for different queries that have similar meanings." (Column 1, lines 52-57.) The search and retrieval system of *Wical* generates a research document that infers an answer to a query for multiple documents. The search and retrieval system includes point of view gists for a plurality of documents. A point of view gist provides a synopsis for a corresponding document with a slant toward a topic. To generate a research document, the search and retrieval system processes a query to identify one or more topics related to the query. The search and retrieval system selects point of view gists, for multiple documents, with a slant towards topics related to the query. (See, Abstract.) In no way, does *Wical* teach, show or suggest a search expression

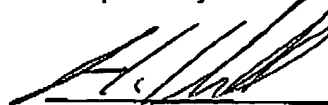
including one or more search terms having one or more weight criteria, wherein the one or more weight criteria include a user designated score modifier. Thus, *Wical* is fundamentally different from the present invention in that the present invention provides for a novel search expression syntax, while *Wical* presumes conventional query syntax, relies on a novel search and retrieval system to identify relevant documents for a query.

In this regard, Applicants respectfully request for clarification of the Examiner's basis for rejection. The Examiner submits that "a search expression including one or more search terms having one or more weight criteria, wherein the one or more weight criteria include a user designated score modifier" is disclosed by *Wical* at column 5, lines 19-32. After careful review of the cited section, Applicants were unable to identify any aspect of the claim recitation. In particular, Applicants point out that the cited section makes no mention of a "search expression", nor any mention of "search terms", nor any mention of "weight criteria", nor any mention of "score modifiers", nor any mention of any combination of the aforementioned claim terms. As such, it is unclear in what way *Wical* discloses the claimed invention as suggested by the Examiner. If the Examiner remains convinced that such subject matter is in fact disclosed, Applicants respectfully request clarification from the Examiner, i.e., particular identification of the above-mentioned claim terms.

In conclusion, the reference cited by the Examiner does not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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